GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3390
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2001
BONDED LABOURERS
CHANDRESH PATEL KORDIA

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the custom of bonded labourers is still prevalents in the country;

(b) if so, the name of places where the said custom is still prevalents;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to eradicate the custom;

(d) the details of bonded labourers identified and rehabilitated in various States from January 1, 2000 to till date, State-wise;

(e) the details of action taken against the persons keeping bonded labourers alongwith the number of such persons detained and convicted;

(f) whether the Government are considering to bring a Bill to impose severe punishment to the persons keeping bonded labourers;
(g) if so, the details thereof;
(h) the time by which such a bill is likely to be introduced; and
(i) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT(SHRI MUNI LALL)

(a) & (b): Incidence of Bonded labour, in a few parts of the country, has been reported from time to time from fourteen States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, Kerala, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.

(c): The Bonded Labour System has been abolished through out the country with effect from 25.10.1975 under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. Under the Act, District Magistrates are empowered to take punitive action against the offenders.

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for rehabilitation of Bonded labourers, rehabilitation assistanceof Rs. 20,000/- per freed bonded labour is provided, which is shared by the Central and State Governments on 50:50 basis.

(d): State-wise bonded labourers identified and rehabilitated from January 2000, till date are as under:

State	Number
Arunachal Pradesh	2992
Rajasthan	104
Tamil Nadu	14120
Uttar Pradesh	79

(e): As per the reports received from State Governments, from time to time prosecutions have been launched for violations under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, in 4533 cases, out of which convictions have been ordered in 1190 cases.

(f) to (i) Under the existing Act, there is a provision for punishment for extracting bonded labour, with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and also with fine, which may extend to two thousand rupees. At present, there is no proposal under consideration of the Government to bring a Bill to enhance the punishment for offences relating to Bonded Labour System.